

Voices from the Valley

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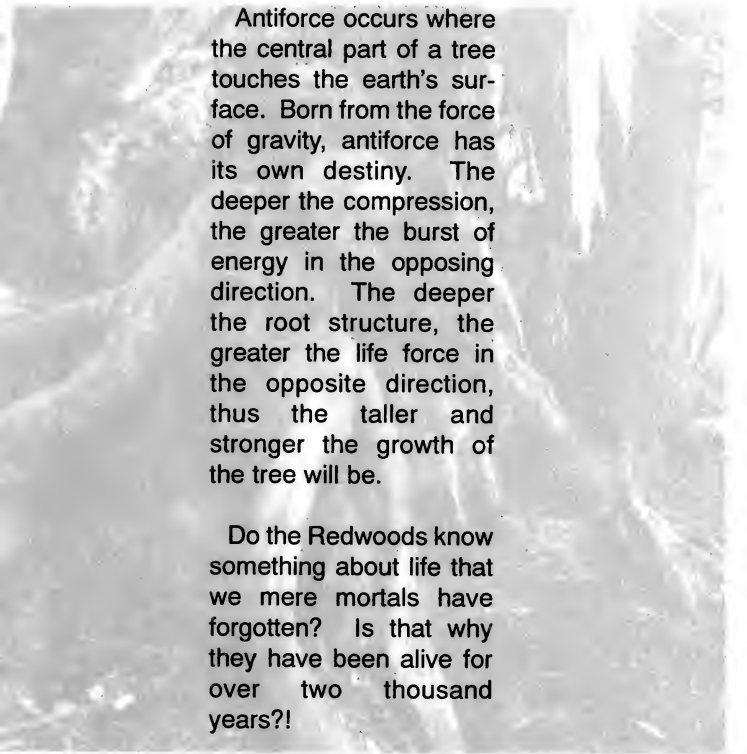
Rock Valley College
Educational Resources
Center

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Spring
1997

Now I shall tell of things that change, new being
Out of old: since you, O Gods, created
Mutable arts and gifts, give me the voice
To tell the shifting story of the world
From its beginning to the present hour.

Ovid, *The Metamorphoses*
Book I, Invocation

Antiforce



Antiforce occurs where the central part of a tree touches the earth's surface. Born from the force of gravity, antiforce has its own destiny. The deeper the compression, the greater the burst of energy in the opposing direction. The deeper the root structure, the greater the life force in the opposite direction, thus the taller and stronger the growth of the tree will be.

Do the Redwoods know something about life that we mere mortals have forgotten? Is that why they have been alive for over two thousand years?!

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r.paul-petersen

Undoing

Pat Walker

In one house
at age six
the adamant rule
shrilled in my ear,
“Don’t come in that way.
Go around to the back!”
Those special ones called “company”
came in the front way
for an effervescent greeting.
My dad with bowed head
and his hat jammed on his head
detoured through the side door.

In another house
at age sixty-two
the voice of freedom
told me
one day when shame intoned,
“Go out the back door
and come in the front,”
to claim me,
precious and free.

SUMMER'S END

Julie Lyle

*The air is crisp with the promise of winter to come,
As the wind whispers through the trees
the secrets of summers' past.*

*The water trickles across the rock
where the creek narrows -
soon to be frozen in time.*

*For now, the geese feed along the water's edge
'til nature calls to take flight.*

*The grass no longer grows and again will be blanketed
in white - as the sun grows cold, it's embers
dying.*

*Once more life meets death,
As summer enfolds into a winter stasis.*

film...

a personal essay

Christopher E. Engler

One night while discussing the arts with a friend of mine, I made a bold statement. As the two of us sat over breaded mushrooms and a slice of pizza at a little, quaint Italian restaurant a couple of blocks away from my house, I told her, "the more I study film, the more I realize that film as a medium is really a hodge podge of all the other arts." In that moment, that very statement that I assumed was common knowledge made her jaw drop. I restated my theory in a more formal way in hopes to clarify my statement. I told her, "I believe film as an art is nothing more or less than the compilation of all other known artistic forms of expression." This clarification didn't help. She, being a die hard dancer for most of her life, took offense to my reasoning.

"I don't see how you could back that up," she challenged as she plopped her slice of pepperoni and black olive topped pizza down on her plate in a playfully pretentious manner.

"What?"

"That's a pretty bold statement."

"It's common sense."

"No, no, no..."

Before I knew it, we were in the middle of a debate. The more I pleaded my case to her, the angrier she became. I tried to make her see that I wasn't saying film was a better art form--just many art forms working together to make a single art. That didn't help.

Having been a fan of films ever since I can remember, there is a drive within me to study film as an art. This drive is one of the reasons why I became a film major. After our unconcluded conversation ended, I started to evaluate my opinion by studying

films and the film making process in order to figure out in my mind if I actually believed this bold statement. Film as an art form is simply a collaboration of most other forms of art in that it combines visual arts, performing arts, literature, and music to make what we've come to know as the art of film making.

First off, we must understand that to define art is a pointless philosophical argument that I'm not about to get in to. Let us assume--for this article's sake--that film is as much of an art as painting, acting, and music composition are. My purpose in writing this article isn't to proclaim film as a superior art form; it is simply to let us all realize how everything in the arts is connected in some way, shape, or form. Whenever I'm asked why I side with this opinion, I

always counter with "What art doesn't film include?" The more I study the film making process, the more I see other art forms creeping in to help film be the powerful art that it is. Bill Scarpaci, a literature professor and community

*(watch Natural
Born Killers or Dead
Man Walking and see
what kind of questions
arise)*

actor here at Rock Valley College, believes this combination of the arts in film is what gives film its power. In my interview with him, he supported my opinion by saying, "One advantage of film as an art form is that it embraces all other art forms in the creative process of film itself. "

Tim Lemke, a videographer at WTVO, told me, "film probably has the most prevalent impact on society. You see film everywhere." Whether this is true or not, it is very evident that film is a very powerful form of art. It's unifying (who here hasn't ever seen a film?). It leads to discussion (watch *Natural Born Killers* or *Dead Man Walking* and see what kind of question arise), and hopefully, on rare occasions, it leads to enlightenment. This is in addition to the entertainment value placed on film.

So, what causes film to be such a powerful medium? It begins with the director.

*** Directing** The first statement that comes to mind when I think about the duty of a director is something Mike Webb, my director, told me about a year ago. "The director's job," he believes, "is to be true to the author's intent." With this duty comes a list of other responsibilities also. The director is the

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"chief interpreter of the work." He is the hub, a supervisor of sorts. For example, "In adapting Shakespeare's *Othello*, Scarpaci explains, "one universal theme in that play would be the tragic consequences of jealousy. The film director

either chooses to emphasize such a universality or he doesn't.... It boils down to this: what the film director chose to emphasize from the work and how well he emphasized it." It is the director's job to keep that common theme consistent in his actors, sets, music etc.... in order to make the universal apparent and true. Lemke adds, "The director's job is to coordinate all the other artists' jobs in the project."

How does he do this? Let's start from the beginning--the written word.

*** Literature** Alfred Hitchcock describes drama as "life with the dull bits cut out." We've all heard this before. The collaboration between literature and film has been very evident since the conception of motion pictures. It's been very obvious in the many translations of Shakespeare's works along with modern day, mainstream authors such as John Grisham and Steven King, but let us not forget the subtle ways literature affects a film. Everything from *Batman* to *My Fair Lady* is derived from pieces of literature. Even the original screenplays from writers such as Quentin Tarrantino or James Cameron are pieces of literature.

Literature studies the aspects of the human condition. Film can also do this. Some people have stretched this belief so far as to link *Gone with the Wind's* Scarlet with Alien's Ripley. The bottom line is when translating a piece of literature into a film, you're getting a combination of two things: a wider audience but only one interpretation. You get a wider audience when a piece of literature is transferred to film because of the very nature of film. Nevertheless, with that advantage of immediacy comes the downfall of a director's single interpretation. As film editor/director at FOX in Rockford Jose Cabezas says, "Film can serve as an interpretation of literature, but it alters your opinion of that. It's one interpretation. Literature is personal."

After understanding the relationship between the written word and film, we can then move onto the visual realm.

*** The Visual Realm of Film Making** Drawing, architecture, sculpting, and painting are all parts of the film making process. For most films storyboards are drawn, showing a photography director exactly what a director wants in each scene. The architecture of a set in a film such as *Popeye* or *Hook* is very important to bring the feeling desired by the director. Sculpture is essential for the use of models or prosthetics in film—take a look at *Mrs. Doubtfire* or Eddie Murphy's *The Nutty Professor*. Besides the painting of sets, painting influences film just as it influences photography. The same visual composition of a painting can be

*"It's very much
like Lichtenstein's
Pop art."*

used to make a visual you would see in a film. For example, there's a very big comic book feel to movies such as *Dick Tracy* and even *Pulp Fiction* with its use of terribly bright colors and skewed realities. It's very much like Lichtenstein's pop art. You can also link the visuals behind such period pieces as *A Christmas Story* to many different Norman Rockwell paintings. In short, Tim Lemke says, "In film the actor, the cinematographer, the director, and the editor can control the image the audience sees." So can the artists behind drawing, painting, sculpting, and architecture.

*** Performance Arts** Besides the musician whom we will discuss later, the actor and the dancer are the two people who make performance art what it is. An actor's job, in any setting, whether it be on stage or on screen, is to tell the story. Their prime objective is to advance the plot through the dialogue that has been written for them and to portray that dialogue in such a way that it coincides with the director's vision and keeps the character of the piece still evident. Frank Green, a producer/director at FOX in Rockford, believes the actor's job is "to do what he's told by the director." This is true if you believe the director is the chief interpreter of the piece. It is the director's vision

*"You don't go to the
movie theater to watch
someone dance"*

the actor must work for; this is also why most actors want to direct. "In live theatre the actor has more control of how he presents himself," Lemke says. This is true also. The way you film the actor--what angle you film him from, what music the director has playing over him, the composition you set him in, the editing of the scene, and the way you use his voice in coordination with the visuals-- all affect the audience's perception of the actor's performance. Some of these factors also apply to live theatre.

Now, what about dancing and film? Lorissa Mowers, a choreographer and dancer living in Rockford, states "(Film) cheapens the art of dance if it's not done well," but in that same token she also believes, "If (the film) is done well, dance can create the impossible on film." You don't go to the movie theater to watch someone dance, but it does play an intricate part in almost every film. "A sword fight is a dance, a fight scene, any choreographed piece is dance." Everything from *West Side Story's* dancing to Jackie Chan's ladder fight in *First Strike* to the infamous light saber duels in *Star Wars* are dances. Dancers have changed cinematography forever by demanding the director to film dances the way they wanted them filmed. But even in more subtle ways, (take a look at Brandon Lee's performance in the *The Crow*), on top of his amazing acting skills, his wonderful

grace and cat-like movement really formed his dark, undead character.

* **Music** There are many takes on the importance of music in film. Lemke explainss, "Music is good support in addition to the visual aspect of the film; you can take the same images visually and change the feeling through the music." Arlene Kimbel Sadlon, a local artist and an art lecturer at Rock Valley College, says music in film must "stand on its own as well as meshing with the film's action." Jose Cabezas's rule is "When you don't hear the music, that's when it's the best." Frank Green has a similar take on music in film; he believes the music "is all about mood." Whichever one of these may be true, it is very evident when you watch any film that the soundtrack in very important.

*"there are those
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"It takes a certain amount of awareness to realize that not only is everything connected, but everything is richer after you see the connections," says Sadlon about art in general. I believe your artwork will be narrow if you don't understand and appreciate all the other forms of art; all art influences all other art either directly or indirectly. Scarpaci sums it up best when he says, "there are those people who are so enamored with their own art form they fail to realize the importance of other art." Maybe the power of film doesn't lie in the combining of various art forms to create a hierarchy in film, but in the knowledge that all other art forms have their own important piece in making the project come together. When asked if it was simply about putting it all together, Green responded by saying, "the medium of film can combine all other art forms we've come to know and appreciate," and when it does, Jose Cabezas added, that's when "it's way greater than the sum of its parts."



"Contemplation"
Christopher E.
Engler

Vows

Marilyn Schnetker

Fiercely in obseance —
accepting of

You are /
not mine not mine not mine

Essential, remorseless. Cut:

the implacable umbilical which

Threatens to cord
the wrists and ankles,

Necks
above all and all

It tricks us into two,
it strangles for dissolution:

Disrespect
in acclamation

A NIGHT AT THE FIGHTS

Eugene I. Hawkens

I learned a lot in college. Oh, sure, there were the usual classes in math, science, literature, and all those electives to “stimulate” our brains. But I learned more about people. especially by being away from home and living in the dormitory. Every college student should do it, if possible, for at least a year.

One thing I learned is there are certain people on this earth (not just in college) destined to be the object of practical jokes, freaky occurrences, and embarrassing situations. Call them unlucky, jinxes, schlemiels . . . whatever. My roommate, Doyle, was just such a person. Things just sort of “happened” to him. Not that he didn’t go looking for trouble sometimes, so maybe that made him more of a schlimazel than a schlemiel (where ARE LaVerne and Shirley these days?).

For example, shortly after the beginning of the school year, Doyle thought he would start smoking a pipe. He figured the oral appendage, along with his corduroy IvyLeague cap, would give him an air of intellectualism. Unfortunately, he didn’t know the first thing about smoking a pipe. The upperclassmen on our floor were only too glad to teach him. They told him he must force as much tobacco as possible into the bowl and then be sure to soak it well with “pipe lighting” fluid. Being a lowly freshman, I said nothing, but did manage to evac-

uate the room before ignition. The resulting fireball completely destroyed the brim of his cap and his eyebrows never really did grow back. He was lucky not to have been blinded.

Another time, later in the year, Doyle, who was always sucking up to some professor, volunteered to help out in the science department by setting up labs and preparing the cadavers for anatomy classes. Well, apparently, Doyle, who had never actually seen a dead body before, swooned into unconsciousness when first confronted with a corpse in the storage morgue. A couple of upperclassmen, one of whom was the "pipe lighting expert," I think, placed Doyle on the examination cart under a sheet and wheeled him into the lab. The professor was in the middle of his introduction to the students, encouraging them not to be afraid of cadavers. Doyle chose that particular moment to regain consciousness and, with a loud groan, attempted to sit up. One student (I heard) fainted outright and the professor was obliged to excuse himself to go change his shorts. Doyle was almost expelled for that one.

(Where ARE
LaVerne and Shirley
these days?).

All of this was going through my mind one spring night, as Doyle tried to convince me to attend a campus intramural boxing match in the men's dormitory down the hill from ours.

I had a chemistry exam, not my greatest subject, to study for, and I really needed to get a decent grade to

keep my “strong C” going to retain my athletic eligibility for baseball. But Doyle was determined to convince me to go.

“Oh, c’mon, Roomie, it’s just a couple of hours. You could use a break; you haven’t been anywhere for

“You know, there’s	days,” Doyle whined.
bound to be a bunch of	He reminded me of
Chi Omega girls there;	Icabod Crane, both in
lots of opportunity,	appearance and what I
y’know?”	imagined his voice

would have been like.

“Doyle, I really need to study,” I repeated for about the tenth time. The idea of watching a bunch of guys flailing away at each other in mock combat in the basement of Powell Hall did not interest me in the least. Besides, if Doyle was involved, something weird was bound to happen.

“I’m the trainer, you know,” Doyle said proudly, dressed in his white Levi’s and T-shirt. He lowered his voice and pulled a chair up next to mine. “You know, there’s bound to be a bunch of Chi Omega girls there; lots of opportunity, y’know?”

The Chi’s had the reputation as the “willingest” girls on campus which may or may not have been true. Doyle was determined to find out and took every opportunity to impress them, and was shot down at every turn in flames. But he looked upon the rebuffs as a strange sort of flirtation and always boasted to whomever would lis-

ten that he was “just this close” to establishing a carnal relationship with various members of the sorority. Sound pathetic?

“Doyle, I’ve got to study these equations. It’s really tough. you know? I’ve got a big test on Monday in Jackson’s lab class.” I was hoping logic would prevail before I was forced to threaten him physically if he didn’t quit bugging me.

“Actually, ol’ buddy, there’s a method to my madness.” He looked around as if the walls had ears. “Traci Dillsworth is sure to be there tonight. She’s in my sports medicine class, and I’ve been working on her all week really turning on the ol’ charm, y’ know? I gotta hunch this is the night I’ll get her to come back here to the room with me. And . . . you know . . . if you’re here studying, it’ll just . . . let’s say . . . inhibit her natural instincts.”

All I could do to keep from laughing. He was just too much of a creep sometimes.

“Doyle, the only natural instinct Traci would have toward you would be to tell you to do something physically impossible to yourself.” The statement only made him more determined. I had challenged him.

“Oh, yeah?” he said, his eyes becoming slits, “I got ten bucks here that says I can get Traci to come back to the room with me tonight.” He pulled a crumpled sawbuck from his pocket and slapped it on the desk, nearly upsetting my pop can.

“You’re crazy,” I said. I knew he was baiting me. He knew it always irritated me when he was so arrogant and crude, especially about women. His attitude disgust-

ed me, even though I knew he was just talk. But his ploy succeeded. I opened up my pizza money jar, pulled out a couple of fives and put them on top of his Hamilton bill on the desk.

“Let’s go,” I said with a sigh.

The crisp, cool night air was refreshing as we walked down the concrete stairway (a hundred and five steps I counted them once) to Powell Hall. As we entered through the basement door, I was impressed by how the recreation room had been transformed into an arena. Two old tumbling mats had been “liberated” from the auxiliary gym, and the overstuffed couches had been turned around so that the backs faced the “ring,” instead of ropes, to keep the combatants in.

Caesar’s Palace it wasn’t.

The ping pong tables had been placed on edge to hide two pony kegs of Budweiser (the real reason for the athletic event). “Out of Order” signs had been placed on the clothes dryers which contained a variety of snack food. The stairways at each end of the room served as bleachers. Once full of spectators, they would double as obstacles against any surprise raids by campus officials in search of illegal or immoral activities.

Doyle and I made our way through the crowd to “ringside.” Someone thrust a stopwatch and a tack hammer into my hands and designated me Timekeeper. The “bell” was a drum cymbal (also “liberated” from the band room, no doubt).

Doyle, the ever officious one, took over the “pre-fight” activities by checking each fighter’s equipment.

His all white outfit, complete with towel draped over his belt, made him look like the Good Humor ice cream man. No need for any of the pranks to make him look foolish; he was accomplishing that all by himself.

The first two "fighters" were climbing into the ring as the Chi Omega girls made their entrance. There were about eight or nine of them dressed in skintight black jeans and brown buckskin jackets with the sorority name embroidered in colored beading on the backs. Traci, ever the one to be different, entered last wearing a plain white hooded sweatshirt, a striking contrast to her long auburn hair. She had been in a couple of my classes the previous semester. The one thing I admired about her was her ability not to conform to all the other nonconformists' whims, yet still be a part of the scene. She was one of those people who has the knack for remembering everybody's name and being friendly in a nonphony way. I looked from Traci to Doyle and was confident that my ten dollar bet was safe.

His prefight inspection complete, Doyle climbed out of the ring, kicking over the "bell" with his foot. He selected a spot directly behind me. against the wall. under the stainless steel fire extinguisher. From there he could reach either fighter's corner as if he'd be able to do anything. He slapped me on the shoulder, another thing he always did that I hated, and pointed to the stairway.

"There she is, Roomie. Doesn't she just do some-

I shook my
head in dis-
belief. This
guy was a
loser.

thin' to ya?" He waved to Traci, who responded with a polite smile. "See? She can hardly keep her eyes off me." I just shook my head in disbelief. The guy was a loser.

It was time. I smacked the cymbal with the tack hammer, and the two fighters charged each other from their corners. They were both wearing big, orange football mouth guards which made their gasps for air sound like leaky bellows on a pump organ. Wearing sixteen ounce gloves, their boxing technique was little more than a controlled pillow fight. The crowd howled with laughter. Even the girls seemed to enjoy the action, or maybe it was just a way to get noticed. Everyone yelled encouragement as the two windmilled at each other with little damage inflicted.

When the stopwatch indicated the end of the first round, I had to hit the "bell" about ten times to get everyone's attention. The fighters retreated to their respective corners, and Doyle flew into action, checking each one for signs of injury, though it seemed to me that only a moron could get hurt under these conditions. Both of the contestants were winded from swinging those heavy gloves, but were laughing and joking with the crowd. Traci and a couple of her Chi Omega sisters had moved closer to the ring and were talking with some of my baseball teammates who were tossing popcorn at Doyle as he performed his duties. Traci saw me observing her group and flashed me the "thumbs up" sign. I had to admit that Doyle had good taste.

I put a quarter-sized dent in the cymbal as I signaled for round two to begin. The combatants jumped up

to resume the contest, though not quite as aggressive as before. Doyle made his way back to his perch and slapped me on the shoulder, "See how she's getting closer, ol' buddy? I figure I'll make my move after the next round."

What an idiot.

Meanwhile, the crowd was getting a little impatient with the two gladiators. Fatigue had set in, or perhaps boredom, and the match had deteriorated into more pushing than swinging. A chorus of boos and hisses swelled from the audience. They wanted more action.

What happened next is still somewhat unclear, since I wasn't really paying attention to the fight itself. What I heard later was that one of the fighters had tromped on the other's foot, causing extreme pain and anger, resulting in the injured one thrusting a knee into the groin of the other. All I know is that all of a sudden the ring was filled with people, pushing and swinging. I ducked just as one spectator turned participant flew over the couch and my head in hasty retreat. I heard a collision, then clank, and a groan behind me.

I turned around to see what had happened and saw a pile of white clothing on the floor behind me that contained my roommate. The fire extinguisher was rolling around spewing out soda water all over Doyle's pants and shoes, but he didn't notice. From the large bump on his forehead, it was clear he'd been conked on the noggin by the extinguisher. He was out cold.

The activity in the ring showed no sign of abating as I crawled over to Doyle and pushed the extinguisher

away. I leaned him up against the wall and used his towel to fan his face. The bump was about the size of a golf ball. It didn't appear to be serious, but I was worried about his unconsciousness. A voice behind me said, "Let me take a look."

It was Traci. She took Doyle's wrist in her hands and checked his pulse, then felt his forehead. She took the

"Collisions between idiots
and fire extinguishers?" I
asked.

towel from me and placed it behind his neck, like a pillow. I thought it was too bad that Doyle

wasn't awake to enjoy this attention he had sought. Traci rummaged through Doyle's trainer bag and found a smelling salt capsule which she broke under his nose.

"This'll bring him to," she said with a smile.

True enough, Doyle's eyes fluttered open and he moaned as Traci placed the towel in his lap. His face was the color of a vanilla shake, and the bump was beginning to glow like a lighthouse beacon.

"Think he'll be okay?" I asked dumbly.

"Yeah. except for a headache tomorrow," Traci chuckled. "I saw him bang his head on that extinguisher. but it didn't fall on him or anything. This stuff'll make him pukey for a while, though. Better get him back to his room. Need a hand?"

Doyle responded by leaning over and throwing up in his trainer bag.

"Yeah, thanks," I said reaching down and grabbing

Doyle under one arm. "How is it you know about this sort of thing?"

"My major is sports medicine and we just finished a seminar on this type of injury," Traci replied as she helped me lift up my groggy roommate.

"Collisions between idiots and fire extinguishers," I asked. She smiled and blushed a little.

The rest of the crowd was still busy trying to sort out the bench clearing incident in the ring and nobody seemed to notice as we guided the rubberlegged trainer up the stairs and outside. The rush of fresh air brought some life to Doyle, but after just a few steps, he groaned and said, "I'm gonna ralph again."

Quickly, we steered him to a concrete flower box where he kneeled as if in prayer and deposited his offering with loud gags. I had to smile, though I did feel sorry for him.

"Just take deep breaths, Daryl," Traci advised.

"Doyle," I corrected her.

"I know," Traci replied with a wink.

I said reaching down and grabbing, "How is it you know about this sort?"

The air felt good, but I noticed my pants were all wet with soda water and I was beginning to feel a chill.

"Thanks for your help, Traci," I said.

She just shrugged her shoulders and smiled. "So how's chemistry? I had Jackson last semester and could only managed a B."

"How'd you know I had Jackson?" I asked.

"Oh, I go by the lab sometimes and see you slaving

away in there.”

“Really? Yeah, it’s a tough class, especially those equations. I just have to put a lot of time into those. I shouldn’t even have come tonight ‘cause we’ve got a big test on Monday and I really should be studying.”

“Maybe I could give you a hand on those . . .”

“Hey! Is anybody going to give ME a hand?” Doyle whimpered from his alter. “I don’t think I can stand up.”

We grabbed him as he was about to fall over and got him to his feet. His eyes were glazed over and he was still pretty much out of it.

“Just great,” I muttered, “A perfect end to a perfect evening.”

“C’mon, let’s get him up to his room,” Traci said, leading the way up the steps, “I hope it’s not on the sixth floor.”

“Second floor, fortunately,” I replied.

It took about twenty minutes and three more pit stops before we managed to get Doyle to our room. I unlocked the door and we escorted him inside. There was a gurgling sound and he lurched to the bunkbeds, caught himself against the upper mattress (mine), and vomited one last time all over it. Then he collapsed into his own lower berth, assumed the deadman position, and began snoring.

“Just great,” I muttered, “A perfect end to a perfect evening.”

Traci laughed softly as she wandered over to my

desk, where she spotted my chemistry book. “Looks like you’ll have to find drier quarters for tonight,” she said turning the pages. She glanced up with a twinkle in her eye, “You got anything in the morning?”

“Uh, well, no I don’t, as a matter of fact,” I replied.

“Me either. The library’s closed, but my roommate’s shackled up with her boyfriend for the weekend at his place. You obviously can’t stay here; he’ll be a mess tomorrow. How ‘bout some tutoring?” She picked up the book and held it out like a serving tray.

“Well . . . I don’t know . . .” I said, “he might need something, and . . . you know how to do these equations pretty well?”

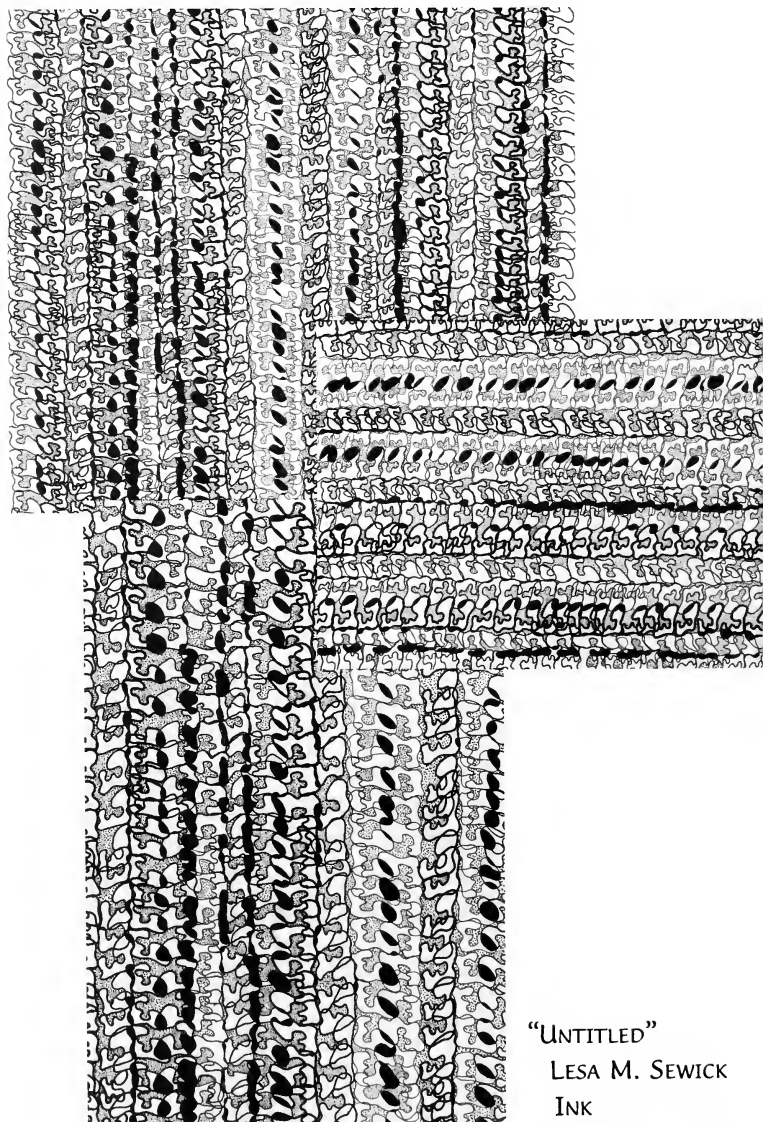
She pushed the chemistry book against my chest and raised herself up on her toes until our noses were almost touching. “He will be fine,” she said slowly. “Now just get your notebook and toothbrush and let’s blow this pop stand. I’m an expert on all kinds of equations.” She turned to the door, stopping just inside the room, “Okay?”

I smiled and nodded. “Sounds good to me.” I grabbed my chemistry folder, toothbrush and a pair of clean sweats and joined Traci in the hallway.

“Oops, just a minute...something.”

I went back into the room and took the three bills off the desk. “Thanks, Roomie, you were right after all,” I whispered as I shoved the money into Doyle’s shirt pocket.

Yep, I learned a lot in college, especially about people. I highly recommend it.🕒



"UNTITLED"
LESA M. SEWICK
INK

Visitor's Summer

Connie Ware

The first day of summer is a gift to us

The first day of summer is a gift to us

The first day of summer is a gift to us

The first day of summer is a gift to us

In August

In the morning along the coast

Those first quality hours

They are good to us

Of the strangers around us

In August

Up the mountainside - a white path

See the flowers bloom in white

Round and round the path

Flat land in white green at last

At last the flowers bloom in white

In August

Wood

Side

Land

Talk

And

In

In

In the morning

Silver and gold in the trees

Silver and gold in the trees

Silver and gold in the trees

Silver and gold in the trees

But

In August





D"

LESA M. SEWICK
INK

Visitor's Summer

Connie Ware

The quiet road is all our own and we walk silently
The purple gentians are in bloom
The bumble bees are all in tune
The tall Joe Pye weed wades its plume
In August

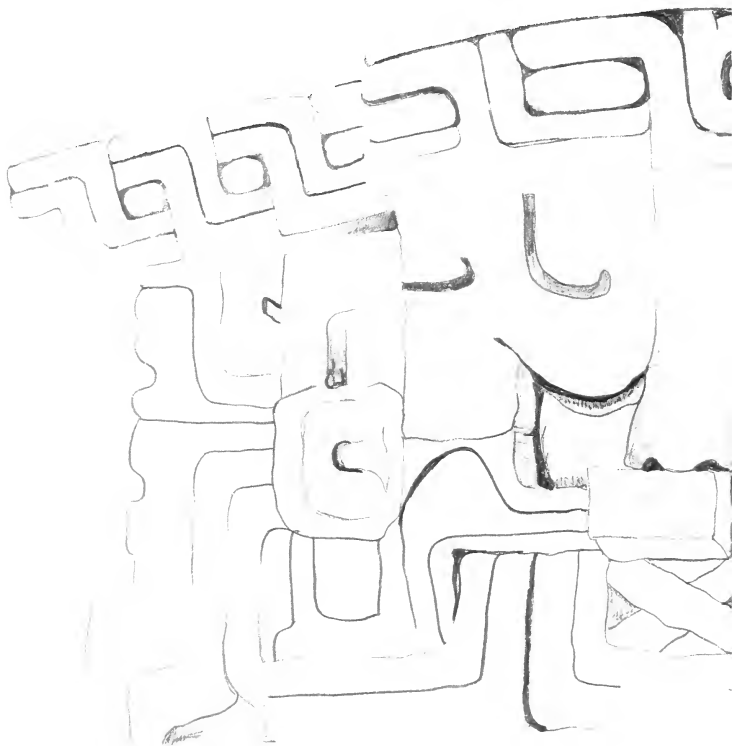
In the swamp along the roadside, in a shadow motionless
Moose stand quietly and stare
They are careful and aware
Of two strangers standing there
In August

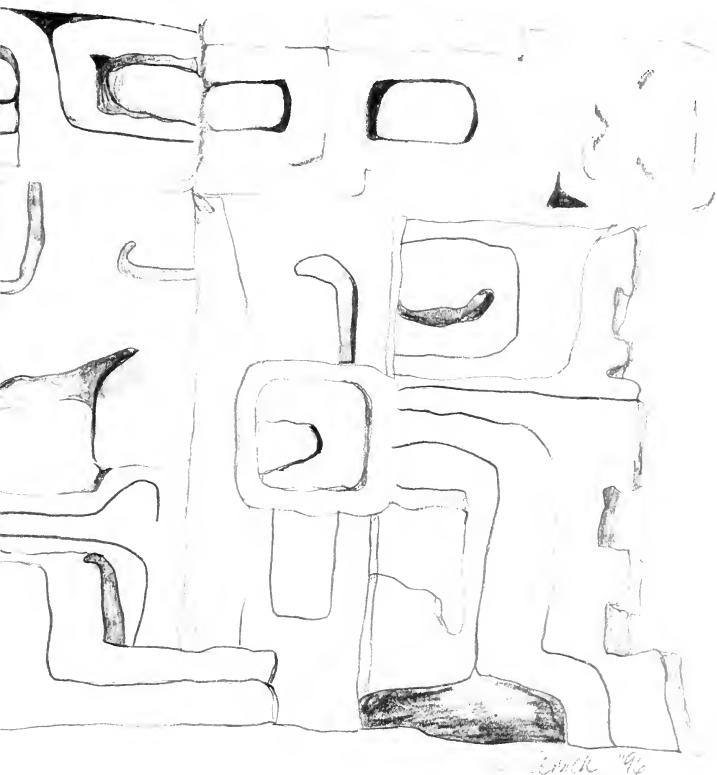
Up the mountainside we wander puffing at the steep incline
See the loadstools like ripe apples
Round and rosy, pink and red
Flat dried bracken, grey as lead
Where the deer has made his bed
In August

Now the shadows slant and lengthen and the loon cries mournfully
We are hungry and head homeward
Glad to greet our guests again
Talk of fish and coming rain
And the moose they saw the same
In August

In the lounge chairs on the screened porch watch the harvest moon arise
Silver arc behind the pine trees
Silver pathway on the lake
Silver Aspen gently shake
But none of us can stay awake
In August

Voices from the Valley





"Xuantunich"
Les M. Sewick
Pencil



Urdu Ghazal

Gar asar hogā meri āhon main
Maut āēgi teri bāhon main.

Sāmnay oon kay utth suki nā nazar
Kaisā jādo hai oon nigāhon main.

Khoold main bhi woh mil naheen saktā
Jo milā hum ko teri chāhon main.

Hum nay palkon say choon leeā sub ko
Jitnay kāntay thay teri rāhon main.

Merā kābā hai tu jahān hai sanam
Meri jannat hai teri rāhon main.

Ghum jo tu nay deē hai dil ko 'Kanwal'
Kaisay shāmil ho woh gunāhon main.

Karwal D. Prashar

A Ballad

آدو غزل
گراثر ہوگا میری آیوں میں
موت آئے گی تیری بایوں میں۔

ساتنے اُن کے اکٹھ سکی نہ نظر
کیسا جادو ہے اُن نگاہوں میں۔

خلد میں بھی وہ مل نہیں سکتا
جو ملا ہم کو تیری چایوں میں۔

ہم نے پلکوں سے چن لیا سب کو
جسٹے کاٹھے تھے تیری دایوں میں۔

میرا کعبہ ہے تو جہاں ہے منم -
میری جنت ہے تیری دایوں میں۔

غم جو تونے دیا ہے دل کو کنول -
یہ شامیل ہو وہ گناہوں میں۔

کنول پر شاعر

A Ballad

Kanwal Prasher

If my sighs were ever to fructify;
My cherished desire? In your arms to die.

Facing you I could not raise my eyes;
Such a spell in your glance lies.

Heaven can never such a bliss supply,
As in craving for you does lie.

Softly with my eyelashes I hath,
Plucked all the thorns on your path.

Worthy of pilgrimage, you are the shrine.
Your path, my heaven, my love divine.

O "Kanwal," the grief that has pierced my heart,
How could it be blamed, labeled as a dart?

***Urdu-written right to left, using Persian, Arabic script.
The language was developed in India.***

मेरी माला

कांपते हाथों में पकड़े
मैं माला अपने लगा।
सब देशों के मनके
इसमें मानवता का धागा ॥

My Rosary

छोटे बड़े हर मान के मनके
रंग इनका मन भाए।
भिन्न भिन्न हम सबने जैसे
विधाता से माग्य लिखाए ॥

अपने जीवन उसी से रोशन
ऐसी है वह ज्योति।
सबको राह दिखाने वाली
ताकत जैसे होती ॥

मेज़बान, महमा मिलकर
सब ऐसा नाता जोड़े।
जो बटवारा करवाती हों
उन हदों को तैदे ॥

MERI MĀLĀ (MY ROSARY)

Kāmpṭay hāthon main pakḍay
Maen mālā japnay lāgā.
Sub deshon kay mankay
Ismain mānavtā kā dhāgā.

अथक हो हम सबकी कोशिश
हमें ऐसा मिले वरदान।
मानवता का संस्था भविष्य
वरक्षो हमें भगवान ॥

प्रो. कंवल प्रशार

Chhotay baday her bhānt kay mankay
Rung inkā mun bhāē.
Bhinn bhinn hum sub nay jaisay
Vidhātā say bhāgya dikhāē.

Apnay jeevun usi say roshan
Aisee hai veh jyoti;
Subko rāh dikhānay wāli
Tāqat jaisay hoti.

Mezbān, mehmān milker
Sub aasā nātā jodain;
Jo butwārā kurwāti ham,
On hadon ko todain.

Athak ho hum sub ki koshish
Hamain aasā milay vardān;
Mānavtā ka sāṅghā bhaviṣhya
Bakhsho hamain Bhagwān.

Prof. Kanwal D. Prashar

My Rosary

Kanwal Prashar

Holding in my trembling hands,
I recite my new rosary;
Its beads are from different strands,
On the string of humanity.

These beads are of various weights,
And sizes, shapes and hues;
Like all our different varying fates,
And the ever-changing views.

Our lives, just like little candles,
Lit from the same common source;
Are guided by a power that handles,
And keeps us on true course.

May the hosts and guests and all,
Build ever stronger ties;
And destroy the narrow domestic wall
That between us lies!

To all of us who want to find,
With all our tireless strife;
A common destiny of mankind,
Pray, grant a meaningful life.



"Shanghai 1945-46"

Lloyd Hoshaw

“CHICHEN ITZA”



Portrait de l'artiste, 1889 Vincent van Gogh

Anne Sautman

Se peindre est se rechercher
Tu veux comprendre alors tu te regardes
Tu ne vois rien sauf toi-meme et le desordre
Toi et les environs sont seuls

Tes yeux regardent avec intensite
mais ils voient les objets differents
Ton veston vert remue comme le vent
et le vent vert t'entoure et t'enveloppe

Tu as peint beaucoup de portraits
Est-ce tu comprends encore?

To paint yourself is to look for yourself
You want to understand so you look at yourself
You see nothing but yourself and disorder
You and your surroundings are alone.

Your eyes look with intensity
but they see different objects
Your green jacket moves like the wind
and the green wind surrounds you and wraps you.

You painted many portraits.
Do you understand yet?

Through My Eyes

Cheryl Diehl

*I sit on the green, grassy bank
In between a huge, thorny thistle
And a tiny pastel clover that smells like honey,
Above the creek bed so shallow
I can hear the muddy water babble
A tune to the rocks
As it bounces from one to the other.*

*My eyes gaze, unmoving, to the open pool
Next to the rocks where insects
Dive from the sky like Olympic heroes
Daring not to make a ripple
In the center of their target.
As they touch the water
A circular current moves across the surface,
Growing larger and larger,
Merging with the rings of other divers.*

*Youthful eyes
Looking into a kaleidoscope,
Ever turning in circles,
Black and white fragments,
Pretending to be my life.*

*A swarm of lively, buzzing mosquitos,
Resembling tiny cupids shooting arrows everywhere,
Leaving heart-shaped beads of blood
Call me back as their translucent bodies
Glisten in the waning rays of the evening sun.
As I walk away I can feel him here.
My life is a colorful array of geometric
Images, each piece fitting exactly next to the other,
Turning in a circle of neverending Love.*

Through My Eyes

Portrait de l'artiste, 1889 Vincent van Gogh

Anne Sautman

I sit on the grassy bank
In between a hedge, the tiny thistle
And a tiny patch of clover that smells like honey
Above the creek bed where the water flows
Tu vois devant toi le monde que tu regardes
Tu ne vois rien de tout cela
Le désordre
Toi qui es si ordonné

But they see the world
mais ils voient autre chose
Toi qui es si ordonné
cl le vent qui souffle dans l'éloignement
In the center of their target.

Tu as peint beaucoup de portraits
Est-ce tu comprends encore?

Looking into a mirror
To paint yourself is to look for yourself

You want to understand so you look at yourself

You see nothing but yourself and disorder

You and your surroundings are alone.

Ever turning in circles,

black and white fragments

Your eyes look with intensity
but they see different objects

Your eyes look like the wind

blowing through the trees and wraps you.

Leaving heart-shaped beads of blood

Call me back as the sun sets

Glisten in the evening sky

As I walk away I can feel him here.

My life is a colorful array of geometric

Images, each piece fitting exactly next to the other

Turning in a circle of never-ending love.



"Untitled"
Cheryl Diehl

Cold Fire

David G. Thompson

January 1942: The Eastern Front

Lieutenant Heinrich Schlenker trudged arduously through knee-deep snow as the weak winter sun slanted rapidly downward toward the horizon. He needed no thermometer to tell that the temperature was falling fast. With nightfall would come death unless he could find some form of shelter. He was not even certain he was still on the road, for blowing snow had covered the vehicle tracks he was trying to follow back to the German lines; but there was nothing to do except continue.

As the lieutenant slogged on, his mind wandered back to the ambush into which his panzer detachment had fallen that afternoon. With the exception of Schlenker, the Soviets had wiped out the entire unit. He alone had escaped on foot, leaving behind the screams of his driver, burned alive by flaming diesel oil. Now it seemed the lieutenant would soon be rejoining his men by a different, slower form of death. Even if he were still on the road, no traffic could be expected before morning.

Schlenker shed his equipment piece by piece as fatigue began to weigh on his limbs. Finally, he carried only a box of matches, a canteen full of petrol, and his Luger. He considered dropping the canteen as well, but without it he would have little hope of starting a fire even if he did find shelter.

It was almost dark. The low hills around him were silhouetted against the gray sky, and the depressions between them were veiled in gloom. The howl of the wind rang in his ears. He stumbled, fell, and slowly got to his feet again. What a lousy place to die, he thought. Always expected to go out in a blaze of glory, not like this . . .

A dark shape loomed ahead in the snow. A cabin? No, it was a wrecked vehicle: a knocked-out Russian tank, Schlenker realized as he approached it. Apparently it had struck a mine, for aside from a thrown track and some damage to the suspension, it seemed intact.

It took nearly all his remaining strength, but with numb hands he hauled himself up onto the deck of the tank and clawed at the main hatch atop the turret. It was heavy, but after several tries he managed to pry it open, then climbed stiffly down inside and closed it behind him. The pitch of the shrieking wind lowered to a moan.

Inside it was almost completely black, and Schlenker sat shivering in the commander's seat for several moments before he began to sense he was not alone. He felt a body in the gunner's seat lower in the turret, and at first he assumed it must be a corpse; but then it moved slightly. He almost blurted out, "Wer ist das?" but caught himself. No

point in announcing his identity by asking who it was. Instead he reached into his pocket for the matches and tried to strike one, only to find that his fingers had gone completely useless from the cold.

The silent companion seemed to sense what Schlenker was trying to do and reached out to help. Reluctantly, the lieutenant surrendered the matches. There was a rasping sound followed by flickering light, and he found himself facing a bearded, filthy Russian soldier, perhaps a survivor from the tank's crew. Both men seemed too stunned to do anything, but Schlenker still had the presence of mind to make a quick survey of the tank's interior before the match went out. "Wir muessen Feuer machen," he said. "Verstehen Sie? Fire, do you understand? Englisch? Francais?"

The Russian said something in reply, but it was completely unintelligible. "That figures" Schlenker muttered. "The only ones with any education are your political commissars." He began to grope around the inside of the turret, fumbling with his useless hands, until he found what seemed to be an empty ammunition box made of wood. He tried to break it into pieces but found the task quite impossible in his present state.

"Help me with this, damn it, or we're both going to freeze."

The Russian finally seemed to figure out what Schlenker was trying to do, and in a few minutes they had a small pile of wood stacked in the empty driver's seat below their feet. With some further difficulty, Schlenker then managed to hand the

Russian the canteen full of petrol. "Benzin," the German hissed. "Petrol. Pour a little on the wood, you stupid peasant."

At last they got the fire burning, and although the inside of the tank remained cold as a meat locker, Schlenker gradually began to feel some life creeping back into his frozen limbs. As his hands warmed, he thought of the Luger inside his coat. Was Ivan having similar thoughts? His grimy face was unreadable in the weak, flickering light of the fire.

Schlenker tensed as the Russian reached into his own coat, but instead of a weapon, the soldier brought out a small, polished metal flask. The lieutenant began to laugh uncontrollably, and then the Russian as well, until they both had tears streaming down their cheeks. Schlenker savored the feeling of the vodka as it seared down his throat, and for a moment he could almost forget how cold he was. "No wonder you bolsheviks seem so brave," he laughed. "You go into battle drunk."

The two men passed the flask back and forth for a long while, taking only small sips to make it last longer. They stared at each other, saying nothing. Finally Schlenker said, "Heinrich," pointing to himself with his thumb. "From Berlin."

"Peter," said the Russian, pounding his chest for emphasis. He went on to say some more, of which the German could not understand a word.

"Well, you know, Peter, you really do have a barbaric language," Schlenker said in a kindly tone. "And you're an ugly bastard, too," he added with a grin. They went on to sing a couple of songs,

none of which made any sense to the other. Then they fell asleep huddled together, still shivering, wedged in among the control levers and unspent shells. Schlenker's last conscious thought was that it would be ironic if their little fire should happen to cook off the ammunition and blow them both to hell. Well, at least that would be quicker than freezing to death.

The panzer lieutenant awoke to find sunlight filtering in through the vision slots. The fire had gone out, and Peter was still asleep. Carefully, Schlenker disentangled himself and climbed out through the hatch. "Auf wiedersehen, Ivan," he muttered under his breath.

Shading his eyes against the glare, he saw that in fact he had not been far at all from the road, and there were fresh tracks. Several vehicles had passed this morning already, but whose were they? Well, he would just have to take his chances. Climbing down from the wrecked tank, he set out in what he hoped was the direction of the German lines.

The lieutenant had not walked more than a few hundred meters before he heard the grinding clatter of an approaching vehicle from ahead. He thought of hiding to see what it was, but before he could accomplish anything, the tank hove into view over the top of the next hill. He sighed, breath steaming, when he recognized the familiar, boxy shape of the Panzer Mark III and the black cross on its turret. He waved his arms and waited until the tank lurched to a halt beside him. It belonged to his own battalion.

"Herr Leutnant!" the vehicle commander, a sergeant, exclaimed when he recognized Schlenker. "They sent us out to look for your group. What happened?"

"Vernichtet," Schlenker muttered. "All dead."

"How did you survive the night, sir?"

"Never mind. How far back to your lager?"

"About four kilometers."

"All right." Schlenker climbed up onto the rear deck above the engine, reveling in the warmth it gave off. "You can take me back, but first look over there." He pointed. "There's the hulk of a T-34 to the left of the road, just at the edge of the woods below the crest of that next hill. You see it?"

The sergeant raised his binoculars. "Jawohl."

"Put a shell in it."

The tank commander barked a curt order to his gunner, and the turret moved slightly. Schlenker covered his ears just in time for the sharp, whip-crack report of the panzer's long-barreled 50-mm gun. The gunner was either very good or lucky, he noted, because the T-34 exploded in flames after just one shot.

"Direct hit," the sergeant noted with satisfaction. "Anything else, Herr Leutnant?"

"Nein. Let's get out of here: I'm starving. Have you got a cigarette?"☞

LA SAINT VALENTIN

Mary Krezel

Les coeurs de la St. Valentin
sont rouges, roses et mauves.
Ils sont pointus sur le bas et
ronds sur le haut.

Tu fais des valentins
le jour du Saint Valentin
et les donnes a tes amis.

La Saint Valentin est
un jour special avec
L'AMOUR.

The hearts of Valentine's Day
are red, pink and mauve.
They are pointed on the bottom
and round on the top.

You make valentines
on Valentine's Day and give them
to your friends.

Valentine's Day
is a special day with
LOVE.

elefantes

Amy lunghuhn

**grises, enormes
se reunen en manada, rugen, corren
son animales majestuosos
encantadores**

**gray, enormous
herd, roar, stampede
they are majestic animals
enchanted**

Le temps

Georgeta Morosanu

**Eternel ou envolé
C'est pour apprécier, pour perdre pour ignorer
Chacun a sa manière de l'utiliser
Relatif!**

**ETERNAL OR FLOWN AWAY
IT'S TO APPRECIATE, TO WASTE OR TO IGNORE
EACH OF US HAS OUR WAY OF USING IT
IT'S RELATIVE!**

Esposo

Ruth Elizabeth Holt

CONFIDENTE, AMANTE
SUSTENTA, DIVIERTA, CONFIA
HECHO A LA MEDIDA
CORAZON

Husband

CONFIDANT, LOVER
HE SUSTAINS, AMUSES, TRUSTS
MADE TO MEASURE
HEART

Le chanteur français

Sandra Linquist

Qu'est-ce que vous voulez?
Qu'est-ce que vous voulez?
Je veux chanter les blues,
mais Je suis français et
les français chantent le
disco!

Qu'est ce que vous voulez?
Qu'est-ce que vous voulez? Je
veux chanter les Beatles,
mais le gouvernement français
deteste l'anglais!

The French Singer

What do you want?
What do you want?
I want to sing
the blues, but I
am French and the
French sing
Disco!

What do you want?
What do you want?
I want to sing the Beatles,
but the French government
hates English!

1922-1995

ASSASSINATION

Nicholas B. Blosser

Then I made a pilgrimage across the desert-
To tell the people at the Wailing Wall-
Quit crying.

I climbed Mt.Zion-

And begged the sun to hold me.

I dived as a cannon ball-

Just like a child-

Into the river Jordan-

And baptized myself in freedom.

I staggered, drunk across her soil-

And heard the brief prestorm calm-

Before the thunderous sounds-

Of the doors, and crowds-

Filled the streets with tears.

And it was then-

In that second the revelation came-

In the confusion of the mass-

We are only human-

Easily dissected-

By a gun.

Then I floated in the murky salt of the Dead Sea-
And was reminded of how we all bounce back-
From monumental change.

I crawled through the aquaducts of the lost-
Cities of the dead-

And found that the work of our hands-
Can last for thousands of years.

I rode shotgun with a native trucker-
Across her roads-

And marveled at how pavement made-
Jerusalem and Jericho just questions at-
A crossroads.

And stopping off on the side of the highway-
For hobo coffee and moon light daze-

I thought I heard Gabriel as a breeze-
Tickle the nerves of my soul.

We are human I think he whispered
Able to kill each other-

Unable to silence a dream.

1922-1995
ASSASSINATION

THE CANYON

Nichole Brady

As I sit with my coffee and cigarette in front of me,
I imagine that one day happy again I will be.

Alone, I sit in a room of people
- kind yet not speaking to me.

I seem to dwell on what I do not possess,
Although the list of what I do seems so meek.

As energetic as I might be,
I am physically as well as mentally weak.

Death is outrageously consuming of one's thoughts and time.
Life should outweigh death,
although
the scale falls the other way.

Rise out of the canyon
with the steep,
jagged
cliffs
and balance out the scales.

Then get a good running start
and fly out
and over
then into the center
of the canyon



FEEL IT?

Nichole Brady

Feel the pain as it
penetrates the underside of your skin.
That is where it hurts you know.
NOT the bruises, NOT the abrasions -
those are only minute amounts
that in reality are pleasurable.
The REAL stress, burning, aching, piercing,
pulsating pains are under your skin.
Those are the bruises that
condemn us all.
Once - Then twice - Then again and again until
we ourselves become the afflictor.
And we are hated as much as we hated the afflictor
of our internal wounds.
But does anyone really know they are doing it?

PAUL GREENLAND:

WRITER IN TWO WORLDS

Cheryl Diehl

Rockford native Paul Greenland, who graduated from Rock Valley College and Rockford College, recently published his first book. It is a historical account of the Chicago Blackhawks Hockey team from 1926 through 1995.

"As I sat there in an empty Chicago Stadium, waiting for the athletes to emerge from their locker room for practice, everything around me was dark and quiet. Above me, attached to the rafters, were the banners commemorating various Chicago Blackhawk achievements and the numbers of retired athletes. The only sound was the ghostly movement of air circulating through the cavernous area.

This excerpt from the prologue of *Hockey Chicago Style* shows Greenland's style and ability to entice even non-sports fans to enjoy his book: Greenland chats about his experiences as a writer and published author. His own personal story, like the growth of a hockey team, has had its share of elusive success sprinkled with nostalgia and humor.

Paul thought about how he got started as a writer. He admitted that he has always loved hockey and the Chicago Blackhawks is one of his favorite teams. But he reflected a bit deeper:

"It's funny, I don't really know how I got where I am. It's tough when you are in college. There is so much

anxiety about, 'Gee I have to know what I'm going to do with the rest of my life. I've gotta' get this degree and this is what I'm going to do. I'm currently employed in the field of Human Resources Management but [the world of writing] is where I go, like the needle of a compass, when I'm not doing anything writing is always on my mind. It's like a calling almost. I guess it started with something in my personality must have led me here.

What are your favorite parts of writing?

"I love research, if I could do this full time I'd do it. I love putting books together; I love going different places and seeing where things have happened and I'm really interested in the past. I was able to travel to Toronto and I spent a whole week at the [Hockey] Hall of Fame. The contacts I made from the first book has opened doors for me. I spent two days at the Detroit News Building. I was given permission by the head of the newspaper to use the archives [while researching for a new book] . It is an enormous room of filing cabinets; they have clipping files on everything that has ever been in the news.



PAUL GREENLAND:
AUTHOR OF
Hockey
Chicago Style

How long did it take you to write and prepare for this publication?

"Five years. I was in college at the time and had very little money to spend on it. I was learning about how to write the process of writing a book and learning

about hockey and hockey history all at the same time.”

Paul describes his total immersion into the world he writes about:

“Just being in the Chicago Stadium at the United Center [before they tore it down] was enough for me. I didn’t even have to see the game. I recently got the chance to go to Maple Leaf Gardens [where the pro-hockey team plays in Toronto]. There were all of these great buildings. It was like, wow, just being in the lobby! In those great, old arenas, your mind races, and you can almost see the ghosts of hockey past. You can picture all of the great events that have transpired. It really is a unique experience for a history buff!

He got a faraway, dreamy look in his eye as he remembered:

“I got to sit on the player’s bench!”

Do you consider yourself a real writer, or an editor/compiler, after your experience with this first historical nonfiction book?

“I’ve asked myself that many times. I don’t feel it is my book. It’s really the players’; it’s their story. Take all of those reporters who compile stories from their columns for several years and then just string it all together into a book. I haven’t even been alive during most of this history. Where it comes in [his skill as a writer] is in the interview.

I do my own original personal interviews and I give the whole range from good to bad of the person and let the reader decide. I ask questions that you

probably wouldn't find in other books like, 'What's it like to be in a fight?'

To this, Paul describes an interview with Cam Russell, one of Chicago's "Tough Guys":

"Y'know, guys like me spend most of the time worrying about it, but you don't expect it when it happens. The adrenaline is rushing so fast that you can't even feel it when the other guy is slugging you in the face, but the next day you feel it when you put your helmet and gloves on!

Paul discussed his next publishing:

"I have written a book about the Detroit Red Wings. It is bigger than this one. I have a 'real bug' to write fiction, but it just won't come out! That's another whole style of writing; one I'd love to pursue when I have time. I want to break out in something other than hockey. I know of the author, Scott Turow, who wrote *Presumed Innocent*. He is an attorney and the vice-president of The Author's Guild. He once said he always wanted to write and be an attorney, but everyone told him it wouldn't be easy. Well, I'm currently working in human resources and I want to write.

To my query about how his two worlds connect:

"I do a lot of business writing. My strong business background has helped me in book publishing. You have to read everything in those contracts before you sign anything. There are proposals I have to write to agents and publishers. You've got to really 'sell yourself'! I send out public relations ads about myself to different teams

in the NHL, the IHL, and other leagues to get my name out there and find new writing jobs.

The publishing of his first book has opened doors for him in other writing mediums.

"I've been writing for *Michigan Hockey Magazine* three times a month. The articles are on the greatest Detroit Red Wings of the 1950s, 60s, 70s, and 80s. The series, entitled "*Our Hockey Heritage*," will end with a 'road to the playoffs,' series of articles, highlighting the last Stanley Cups Detroit won in the 1950s. This magazine recently branched off into Illinois with a monthly called *The Hockey Times*. I am their Western Illinois correspondent, and I will write a feature article each month through April. The February article features Rockford's high school hockey team, the Rockford Icemen. In March I will feature the Quad City Mallards of the Colonial Hockey League. And in April the article will be on the new ice rink being built by the park district.

Now has your life been affected or changed by the success of Chicago Hockey Style?

"Well, I guess I tend to downplay what I've done a lot in my mind. I catch heat about that from some of my friends who say, 'Look at what you've accomplished.' Still, it is wild to see your own book on store shelves, and your name in the library's computer! I'm just trying to stay focused on getting the next one out and begin something new, maybe a biography or something other than hockey.

Paul's advice to other writers is something that was instilled in him by his writing teacher at Rock Valley

College, Scott Fisher:

"Don't give up!" There were so many sleepless nights that I just about gave up. And it's not the money there is the thrill; the thrill of the "romance" at being in those old places in history, the thrill of the excitement of the moment, of bringing together two former players who hadn't seen each other since their days on the team.

The following are words from Greenland's prologue in *Hockey Chicago Style*, foreshadowing his future in writing:

"BEFORE LONG, THE PLAYERS BEGAN TO EMERGE ONE BY ONE INTO THE UNLIT RINK. DRESSED IN RED AND BLACK PRACTICE JERSEYS THEY GRACEFULLY CIRCLED ABOUT THE RINK IN TRUE HAWKLIKE FASHION. EVENTUALLY, AFTER HUNDREDS OF PUCKS WERE BROUGHT ON THE ICE, AND THE MAIN LIGHTS HAD COME ON, THE REST OF THE PLAYERS EMERGED AND THE GRUELING PRACTICE BEGAN. AS PUCKS AND MEN CRASHED INTO THE PLEXIGLAS NEAR MY SEAT AND THE PLAYERS BEGAN TO LOOK EXHAUSTED, I REALIZED THAT THE SEASON THAT LAY AHEAD OF THEM WAS IN A CERTAIN SENSE SYMBOLIC OF THE LONG ROAD AHEAD OF ME IN COMPLETING THIS BOOK."

Footnote:

Greenland's first book, *Hockey Chicago Style*, is available at area book stores. His new book about the Detroit Red Wings will be released later this year.

Cheryl Diehl

email: ader3sd~rvcuxl.RVC.CC.IL.US 349404583

Raining Brain

Kathy Bennett

insane sane insane sane
same same sane sane
slain pain
of a raining brain

safe and lost inside
raining brain
solitude and
orchestra of wonder plans
whimsical darkness interlacing comedy represses nothing-ness sun flight
blind seeing the criminal enjoyment of sight
phenomenal unidentified flaming objects
of the external internalization and back again around
the way just up the road
right by the old man who said all of your heart five cents to the dollar
slice of solace simmering...senses seem so sanctified...simple stumble-ness
slowly increasing with a lamentation illuminant anomaly.
the road. the side. the me. the time the word we don't use or see.
touch delayed to an enclosed moment caged.
a thought. fleeing... knowing it runs toward the decorative door...
the decorative door open-ing...the wondering window.
wondering why the wind wails.
wandering wonderful whys and hows.

the wind. caring for the casual caress. fleeing
thoughts. casual caress.
last first and next of all the best we know second and
thrice times we divide.
one time we move.
time moves one on.
divide time
caress wind
decorate doors.



"One of those days"

Lisa M. Sewick

Mixed Media

OMNIPRESENCE

Christopher E. Engler

Had a talk with God last night;
Just calling Him back really.
Left a message on my machine
Didn't know I was busy,
I guess I was.

Had a talk with God last night;
Just wondering what He wanted.
Left me with some instructions
Didn't know I needed them,
I guess I did.

Had a talk with God last night;
Just a bunch of phone tag.
Inquiring about His will
Didn't know what He meant,
I guess I should have.

Had a talk with God last night;
Asked Him for His guidance
Didn't see His sign,
I guess I must be blind.

Had a talk with God last night;
Just cried and cried and cried.
Begged Him for His mercy
Didn't feel a change,
I guess I can't.

Had a talk with God last night;
Just had a few questions.
Left a message on His machine
Didn't know He was busy,
but I guess He was....

SCREAMS

Nichole Brady

She sits in a room all alone.
She SCREAMS from the
intense pain that surrounds her.
The mascara,
that at one time was a part
of the mask that protected her,
streamed
down
her face.

Having been excluded from the
society that placed her there.
She desperately dreams
of someday returning.

Unsure of what awaits her
or what she
will do with it.

Dark... so dark... Anticipating
of light a speck

that will never shine on her again.

Is she lucky?

TO ALL WHO DARE...

Fellow grave diggers, you do not know yet, but the sarcophagus you have stumbled upon is that like no other. If you decide to uncover it, that is one thing, and peering inside may spark curiosity, but if you decide to venture inside, BEWARE!... With in are remnants of an ingeniously, evil? psychopath.

If you decide to open and explore these visceral remains, you are to be forewarned, that once you have jarred the sarcophagus, you have also opened the door to darkness, inside your mind and into your life. Inside that crypt you will find a ghastly, horrific short story, *FALLING*. -Meant only for you?, the children of the night.

FALLING is a short story which has been molded by the oppressive isolation of the dark and dreary minded author Nineveh, in hopes to share the dilemmas of life in an abstract and intriguing way, to enthrall and mesmerize you.

Hold on for dear life, and Nineveh prepares to take it from you.

If you wish to comment on this short story, *FALLING*, send E-mail to Nineveh at: SadoSally@hotmail.com

Nicole Teche

We met at a party in the French Quarter about a week and a half ago, before Halloween. It was mainly the usual crowd, a few drug dealers, male prostitutes, and strippers. Being runaways and mostly high school drop outs, you were just lucky to find a job, especially one that you liked, but there were a few unfamiliar faces there, maybe just strays. People were busy mixing a spoonful of speed with a cup of orange juice. The effects were tremendous and usually kept you going all through the night. Some of the people were polluting their bodies with other mind-altering drugs, or drinking as if they were afraid Prohibition were soon on its way. There were always plenty of illegal substances to get your hands on at these kinds of parties in the French Quarter and always something entertaining to do. The make-out rooms were down the hall and I'm sure if you desired to watch a good porno, why bother? One of the girls or guys could give you some real live action, at a feasibly low price.

I first noticed the androgynous-looking boy, thwarted on another young man on the couch, and in seconds, I wished it was me he was lying across. I was sorry to see he was with one of the town's worst and most notorious scare-mongers. As I looked him over, I saw that the skin around his eyes was ashen in color, from lack of sleep or self abuse? The centers of these auras were virdescent and drew me into them, immediately sending an icy cold shiver down my spine

F

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and into my pants where it fought off the ever-so-threatening furnace that I would not let surrender, not here anyways.

I found out later from a “friend,” Lance, that the boy I had been drooling over all night was new in town. From what he knew, the boy had been abandoned as a child by “religious freak” parents who swore he was a “messenger of the dead.”

[I would later learn from the boy that this was his so called parents' excuse, but not the entire truth. His mother had had an affair with a stranger (a juvenile) at a local bar one lonely night. The stranger later ended up being a wellknown pedophile and a suspect in some resent serial killings (which police never had enough evidence to hold a trial for). So, to deny the fact that his wife had “sinned,” they made up this excuse to avoid the truth. They thought that by abandoning the boy their life would be purified and his wife would be forgiven. But the real reason he made his wife give up this boy was because he could not stand the thoughts that accompanied when he looked into this boy's eyes and saw nothing but the cold echo of death staring back at him, and the fact that his wife had cheated on him.]

Vive
Memor Leti-
Live Ever
mindful of
Death

Because of this, he had become known as nothing more than the Saber Tooth Boy, (maybe because of his prominently sharp canine teeth, which I too had characteristics of.)

Time passed quickly. He left the scare monger and we had hung out together at a few more parties sharing some of our deepest, most intimate secrets. I

also found out that he had a tattoo on the inner part of his upper arm that said, 'Vive Memor Leti', which meant 'Live Ever mindful of Death,' I was falling in love.

[Time passed, one and a half weeks.]

[FALLING cont. one and a half weeks later]

On our sixth date together I agreed to meet him at work. It was Halloween night and we had agreed to spend it together alone.

Me and Saber Tooth Boy met in the pet store that night. He was staying after late. After a few minutes of flaxing about, he tried to shove me into a rabbit cage. Enthralled by his spontaneity, it only made me want him more. I trapped him against the wall, forcing my sex upon him, I could feel his breath hot on my throat and the fear pulsing through his blood. Suddenly, before I could even get his pants undone, the wall of the store gave way and opened like a mouth swallowing us in. We were in some kind of underground cave. As we began to walk, we noticed the ground was cold, slimy and slowly moving. We looked down to find we were walking barefoot on a disgusting amount of snakes and cockroaches . We heard the rushing of water somewhere near. "It must be an underground river," I said. He looked at me with his effulgent verdigris eyes, grabbed my wrists and kissed me. There was a pebble in his mouth and it went into mine and before I had a chance to question, I put it in my underwear as suddenly as the ground gave way. We slid through an under-

ground tunnel and ended up floating down a fast river. The water was rough and was pushing us fast in every which way, blinding us to what dangers might lie ahead. Suddenly, there was a waterfall that branched off into two mud slides, if you went right, you fell and, died? the Saber Tooth Boy went right, if you went left.... As I slid, I felt something like sharp teeth or razors cutting up my flesh. I looked down to find my limbs covered in warm red blood drying like candle wax. I blacked out.

When I came to, I was on a cold dirt floor in what looked like a cafe lit by candles, and I noticed a terrible effluvium smell. An old gypsy woman was standing over me picking off the blood that had dried like candle wax. I was frantic and furious, I asked, "Where is my lover?" Surely she would know, being the only other person in this forbidden hell hole. She said nothing but handed me a BandAid and a cigarette. This time I demanded to know, and that if she did not tell me I would beat her to death. Her only reply was "Your lover is dead; that is the price you must pay for your sins of the flesh."

Suddenly I woke up shaking, covered in cold sweat and tears, and to my relief, with my lover in my arms. He woke up, looking concerned and terrified at me as he peeled his arm out from under me. Our eyes met and stopped in astonishment to gaze at the tattoo upon his upper arm. The words *Vive Memor Leti* were outlined in fresh blood.

We were still curled up under the counter in the dark pet shop when we found out that we had shared this bizarre dream, and something much more because "I" was his father.



“THE MOON GLIDES ON SILVER AIR”

David Messenger

THE MOON GLIDES ON SILVER AIR,
SEARCHING ENDLESSLY FOR TOMORROW'S NIGHT.
THE HEAVENS AGLOW IN ALL THEIR SPLENDOR,
BECKONING ME TO FLY.

OH, THE LONGING FOR ME TO SPREAD MY WINGS,
AND TAKE TO THE HEAVENS ABOVE.
OH, THE SORROW THAT CLOUDS MY HEART,
SORROW OF EARTH'S COLD CHAINS WHICH,
BIND MY FEET.

THE WONDEROUS MOON AND ITS PENETRATING AURA,
TRAVELS IN ITS ENDLESS EVE.
CHASING THE SUN ON A JOURNEY
THAT NEVER ENDS.
HE LONGS TO WARM HIMSELF BY HER LIGHT.

HE AWAITS HER TOUCH AND,
PASSIONATE KISS BUT,
ONWARD SHE RUNS IN HER
ENDLESS DAY DREAM.
THEY ARE NATURE'S DIVINE LOVERS BUT
NEVER WILL THEY MEET.
LOVE ISN'T BLIND,
FOR HE AND SHE ARE ITS EYES.

<p>“BECKON” CHERYL DIEHL</p>

Vitrify

NICHOLAS B. BLOSSER

I'm going crazy, I think at least, that
Others may think I am.
Reality is becoming hard, or at least, of
Late others' realities are hard.
I think I'm too voluble for these times.
These "cable, video, laserink jet times"
All these rich sable letters hitting pages
So rapidly that the pages themselves
Are fading so rapidly away.
Seems anyone can write these days.
Seems their intentions seek to vitrify our egos
So everyone has egos that shatter with just words.
Vitrify to shatter, I just wonder was that the plan.

Hence a president turned statesman now has ideas.
Now he cares about human migration, those who suffer
The humiliation of losing their homes.
Or is it his place in history that he's eyeing, not
The broken footed refugees who have wandered
For two years, used up all, even tears.
I've heard that tears are the last to go once we're vitrified.
So I watch him with glassy eyed dissolutionment
(or do I mean disillusionment (Anymore I don't know)
Knowing you can not fain compassion though,
I dream about exodus, and chaos in the air.
Of bodies and how they can seep vermilion when
Punctured by lead, when cut by steel, or glass.
Beautiful, healthy bodies pulsing with fluid, but
Beautiful because the fluid remains inside.
Exposed and corrupted by air though it turns
To burnt sienna, it draws flies.
Hence I create my own reality.
One where the living and the dead

Stare at a sky turned flaxen, streaked lilac
Reflected Daisies and Daffodils

Golden saffron rows of wheat pushing toward heaven.
Azurelike Chrysanthemums bleeding into oceans
Such color combined to become cobalt.
Cobalt like thoughts in free worlds
Worlds where only maestros, and artists, and
Even poets walking with a muse, scream about.

Hence these maniacs wield sabers to release
Vermilion to the earth.

And your sorry sorrow, and hands clutching roses
Will not change reality, will not release me,
Will not let me go.

I just don't want to watch anymore, I could never adore
Your insanity, your brazen red face, your angers.
You have humiliated yourself (me).

Hence a poet can be afraid of words
When words are used in such a way as to become
Your excuses for your sleep.

Sleep well children under your skies turned
Amber from flames, flames that lick your face.
You must be right you thought it all out;
My sarcasm lost on your ears, as lost as I am
In your world, where I am naked with no choice;
But you are clothed in your choices; your voices
Heard loud and clear by refugees around the world
Who really do not care anymore if you care or not.
Who really don't need anymore life spilled by your choices.

Hence the "good" or should I write victors will
Stand on pulpits with words of wisdom for your mass
Ears; painting pictures; or should I write masterpieces
Of peaceful intentions; neglecting vermilion so
You will turn to glass and not feel the warm
River of blood under your feet, staining any
Chance you ever had of grace.

The Stranger

His lips are covered with foam.

in the corner he crouches , he has no home.

As you approach, tears of blood run down his face.

Alone, all alone the man who has been cast from the human race

As you watch him, he holds his breath.

His face turns red as he waits for death.

Suddenly his toothless mouth, saliva dripping, is open wide;

He shrieks and moans.

He grabs and shakes you- his bony hands are so weak.

You stand and stare into his lonely grey eyes.

You put your arms around him - You cannot stop his insane cries.

Suddenly you hear a scream coming from your mouth.

Finally you realize that this stranger is yourself.

David Messenger

I am not the one to blame

Do not put fault on me.

I am not the one to blame

MAN

Is the one who made me

MAN

Is the one that gave me power

MAN

Is the one that pulls my trigger

MAN

Is the one who is at fault

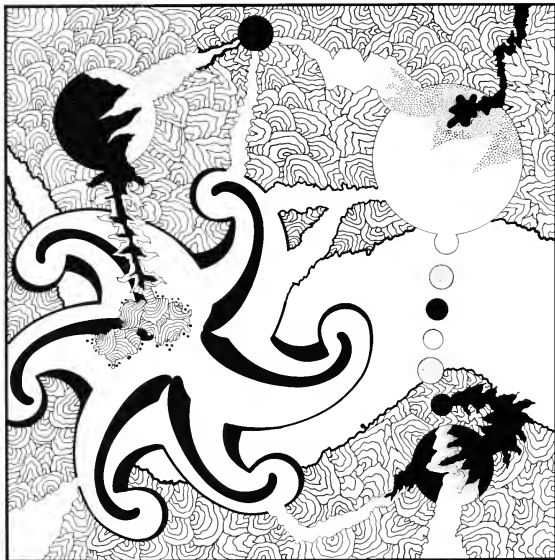
For man gave me the power to kill,

But not the power to die.

Autumn Reeverts

AFRAID

Some people
don't hear
The frighten-
ing cries of
those
Of us full of
fear.



“Untilled”

Lesla M. Sewick

Ink

YuM

Devour.

swallow and be full.

full of me. and

the sky. Full of that one spot

on the moon

my glance habitats.

Full and spinning and

sick.

sick and distant and warped.


weak and placid.

Ranging deranged random-ness

yum.

Kathy Bennett





"I want again"
Deanna Lightfoot

Friendship

Carol Hegberg

I am braiding a rug of friendship
That won't come right.

Three strands . . .

you, me, my other . . .

That twist, tangle,

Trying to be what they can't.

One wraps mine in too much love

The other binds;

One endless plait sewn in a wreath of torture.

From above it appears a beautiful rug,

Yet with the next loop, what will the strands create?

Friendship, after all, is love without wings,

And my rug yearns to soar through the glittery
night with you.



MY POINT™

LESA M. SEWICK

STING RAY

Marilynn Schnetker

you hurt me. It hurt to know
yet a no-fault, no-win
situational distress, I improvised
held tighter to your side than before
engulfed by an empty impasse no light could white
I do. I miss you, no longer tightfaced resentful
Aware of your faults, aware of mine mutually
a loss of importance for specifics & particulars
no matter how much malevolence marauded
I felt hint-thrills of what it would be like to feel
gratitude for giving me a lesson at the least
skipping away, serenity appeals like a stone
across not river, but time
if there is and if there is such a surrender
I would give everything that never needed
a spoken word.

SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN WOMAN

Pat Walker

ROAMING BLACKTOP
THREADS THROUGH OAKS AND PATCHY HAYFIELDS.
ALONG SIDE,
AN AGED WOMAN KEEPS BODY AND SOUL TOGETHER
IN HER OVERSTUFFED CHAIR.

NO CHILDREN BAWL
FOR THE WOMAN TO LAPSIT.
RUBBING HER LEG, A YELLOW CAT PURRS.
WAITING AS SHE IN THE SOFT LIGHT,
TWO BLACK AND WHITE HOUNDS SLEEP.

MISTY WETNESS OF MORNING
SMOTHERS THE SMELL OF HONEYSUCKLE.
HER GARDEN REPOSES
WITH SPIDERS
AMONG THE JUNE-BLOOMING PEAS.

WET BODY-SHAPED JEANS
HANG ON LINES ACROSS HER FRONT PORCH.
A BROKEN COUCH
WAITS FOR COUSIN JIM,
HIS BANJO PICK AND HIS OFT-TOLD TALES.

IN HER WORLD OF THIS THREADBARE CHAIR
HER BODY SITS.
GOSSIP TONGUES OF NEIGHBORS DOWN IN THE HOLLOW
LEAVE STORIES IN HER HEAD.
AFTER BACKWORK AND KITCHEN FIRES
COMES HANDWORK,
DAY AFTER DAY, WEEK AFTER WEEK.
CHILDREN GROW AWAY
AND GO AWAY.
ROADS GO OUT A WAYS
AND COME BACK.

Pachalbel

I can hear
The brush strokes
I've listened
To the canon
All I can see
Is your hands dripping paint

Your artist
Stripped of gloom
Standing naked
Under the Sun
His canvas draped between two trees
His passions, undone

Pachalbel I see it
When I close my eyes
His hands starting slowly
His brush defining lines
Every curve, each delicate stroke
Moving in time
Across each glorious note
I see Lords and Ladies
Dancing under their wigs
I see huge flowery dress rehearsals

Every member in moving motion
In unison
In time

I can see his hands
Dance across the cloth
Vibrant shades of green
Like Spring coming to life
For him the night will never come
The dancing will not stop

Her face now beautiful
Her body delicious
She lays back in her canvas bed
On the leaves that he created
Calling for him
Wanting him
Desire in her eyes

And like you, Pachalbel
He will never touch her
He'll just press against the paint
His naked skin dreaming
Of this vision

**Of this Saint
His naked skin
Just pressed against the paint**

**I hear the act of love
Of sadness, of desire
I can hear your pain like tear drops
lightly tapping the keys
I hear the hope in your hands
praying with each wonderful note
That somewhere she may hear your heart
And come running back to you**

**Poor Pachalbel, didn't you know
Your soul was sold when you painted those notes
You stripped yourself naked
And gave away your dreams to make us dream of you
You chased her down in the green of Spring
And made love in the grass
Her laughter was such sweet music
Like a symphony in your ears
Her flesh felt just like the softest note
You had ever conceived
And the warm breeze of time
Slipped gently passed
Up your spine and then you laughed
As you got up from your piano
With paint still dripping from your finger**

Nicholas B. Blosser

His Perspective

Betsy Zibas

After all, your personality
takes every little thing to heart.
I forgot this often
by some stroke of bad luck.

This isn't goodbye. Not yet.
We sit on jagged rocks
overlooking the stormy lake.
The waves glazing us with its foamy white breath.
You apologize for your tears again.
I've heard it all before,
I remember,
I remind you of what we used to have,
Everything reminds you of that.
On sunny days those memories filter
and shadow us about,
and cast our former existence
to some god forsaken time or feeling
we will never recover.

You apologize again,
snuggling ever so close to me for
leftover warmth,
hugging my jacket like parachute.

You apologize again
and duck behind the
old sycamore tree.
"Fall is just about here" you say.
"Then comes winter and then Christmas,
I can't wait until Christmas."
But I'm afraid I can't make it
through another Christmas
in your house.
I'll be gone before Christmas.

On Teaching Zachary How to Read

Betsy Zibas

**There are words and sentences so beautiful
that they need to be heard,
that need tiny lips
whisper and extract from them
an impression of sound,
speak that same pattern
I have known to be true
through a lifetime of uncertainty.**

**First there were the letters,
a confusion of characters
that frightened you
until we broke them
down into
syl-la-bles:
and you were no longer frightened,
but excited and happy
to hear the melodic sounds
tumbling from your lips,
or the sudden clank of a concept
that just didn't quite fit,
a sound mispronounced,
words improperly enunciated.**

**In time, you found they all began to fit
in blended harmony.
Finally, words were proudly recognized
again and again.
And with new found confidence,
articulation was no longer necessary
and you found the sentences
without even moving your lips.**

GOOD-BYE

Julie Lyle

I looked away one day and you were gone,
To Heaven you ascended without saying good-bye.

I feel abandoned and alone,
The emptiness within me I cannot fill;

The half my soul that was you.

Time has proven a healer,
Wounds will scar -

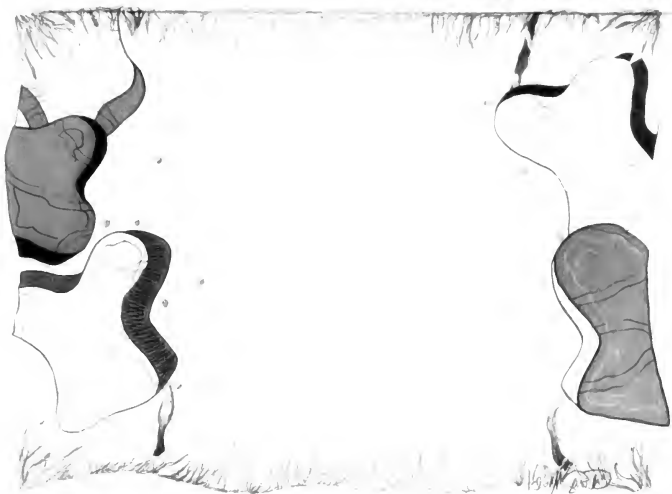
and life -

it will continue.

In my heart, a special place remains,
A gentle reminder of a man I once knew.

Look away one day and I will be gone,
To Heaven I will ascend without ever having said-

GOOD-BYE



"Spinacle"
Lesa M. Sewick
Mixed Media

S

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SINKING. STRIKING.
HIGH ABOVE A PLANE
OF REAL.
REAL HIGH: AROUND
THE CORNER.
HIDDEN AGENDA
PEEKS A NOSE
AROUND MY WALL
WALL WALK;
MY EVERYTHING
IS YOUR NOTHING.

Kathy Bennett



GOOD-BYE

Julie Lyle

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Wounds will scar -

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GOOD-BYE

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SINKING. STRIKING.
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OF REAL.
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HIDDEN AGENDA
PEEKS A NOSE
AROUND MY WALL
WALL WALK;
MY EVERYTHING
IS YOUR NOTHING.

Kathy Bennett

The Business of Theatre

A hands on view of New American Theater's
production of "The Business of Murder"

Nathan Robbel

The tickets are bought. The stage is set. The actors are tense. The director watches from the soundbooth as he prepares for the arrival of the opening night crowd. He takes a final look at the set. the old furniture is placed just right. The lights shine their mysterious light onto the scene in which we will soon all be mesmerized by. The music is begun to set the mood. The gothic feel that has been anticipated for this production has finally set in. The crowd is allowed to enter.

As the last of the crowd enters the theater, a feeling of anticipation looms over the crowd. They nervously flip through their programs, not knowing what to expect. The director finally gives the awaited cue, and the lights go down. The music is turned up a notch, and the sound of thunder is heard as two men enter the stage from the door on stage left that is just visible to us. At this, the audience is taken into a new world created by a combined effort of numerous people.

What was started many months ago as nothing more than an idea has now become a reality. New American Theater's *The Business of Murder* is a success that went exactly as planned. Though New American Theater has been performing successful productions annually in Rockford, one cannot get too used to the routine; it is slightly different for every show. It is a combined process involving the efforts of countless people in all aspects that make

up the magic of the theater experience. A process in which no one aspect is more important than another.

Where does it all begin? What exactly happens between that first spark of an idea in someone's head to opening night? How does an empty stage evolve into a scene depicting quite clearly *The Business of Murder*? It is no easy task. It is thought out and planned quite thoroughly many months before an actor even steps onto the stage.

When planning a season, many things must be taken into consideration. Catering to the audience is always a primary concern. The shows of the season must appeal to the audience, yet challenge them at the same time. The production order will most often have a contemporary or modern show followed by a show of a classical genre. This makes the theater experience entertaining, and it usually draws back a crowd for the next production. Since New American Theater is not a mobile theater company, it is constantly catering for a Rockford audience. By observing the audience's reaction to each production, New American Theater can effectively plan a season that will most likely be successful.

Production costs and technical efficiency must also be taken into consideration when planning a season. For example, a period show done with elaborate costumes will most likely be followed by a contemporary show with less demand on the costume department. A production with a complex set will almost always be followed by a show requiring a simple set with low costs in the set department. In doing so, the set and costume department runs very efficiently and audiences will always get the elaborate environment that they have come to expect from New American Theater.

New American Theater usually casts for their productions at the beginning of the season. Sometimes a certain actor is requested for a part in one of the productions because he or she has either worked with NAT before, or is referred to NAT for the part. Even though this happens

occasionally, there is still always an open call looking for new actors for each production. Because New American Theater is part of a union called The Actor's Equity, they are required to hold open auditions in Chicago for three days prior to the season. This audition is for Equity actors as well as the general public. New American Theater also holds local auditions in Rockford at the beginning of a season, with call-backs later on in the casting process. When choosing an actor for the part, a few things must be taken into

Part of the beauty of the
director's job is the liberty
to do with the play what-
ever he or she sees fit,
and sometimes that
means changing the set
to fit the director's vision.

consideration. Obviously, an actor who reads very well and is good at improvisation will be considered in the casting process. When looking for the right actor for the part, a director also has to consider how well the actor works with the cast. If the actor looks well with the cast and fits the part well, he or she will certainly be considered for the role.

After the casting process is completed,

New American Theater begins rehearsals for each show approximately three weeks prior to the night of the first paying audience. These rehearsals are very gruelling and time consuming, as the actors worked eight hours a day, six days a week. This sounds like a typical work week, but for an actor it is important that his or her lines are learned, and this is done outside of rehearsal. The director expects everyone to know his lines before rehearsals begin. When rehearsals begin, often lines are changed and blocking directions are given. An actor must learn these as well, so the memorization of new lines and directions almost never stops. Rehearsals don't stop after opening night, however. As the

director observes the audience's reaction to the performances, his instructions sometimes change and the cast reworks many scenes to please the audience better. Usually rehearsals stop after this point, though they can be resumed when the director feels it necessary. Often rehearsals continue for the understudies, who go on for the leads in case of an emergency. This has been known to happen and is taken seriously as it is hard for everyone when a lead character suddenly cannot play the part.

The set is also built three weeks prior to the first public performance. When dealing with sets, New American Theater doesn't always go by the book. Most plays and musicals have suggested sets that the playwright offers for consideration.

First of all, New American Theater is in the round. This means that the stage is thrust into the middle of the audience, so that a show is a very personal experience for the audience as well as the actors involved. This is very different from the traditional stage in which the audience all face the monstrous stage in which the actors perform their art. Sometimes the suggested sets don't work for theaters in the round, so they must be altered to work with this kind of stage. For example, the first show of the season was *Big River*. This is a musical based on Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*. This set was very big and impressive on Broadway, but New American Theater altered the set to fit their stage. Though this made the production much simpler, the audience could concentrate solely on the performers, and the show was excellent.

Secondly, production costs (raw materials, set designers, etc.) must be taken into consideration when designing a set. If the previous production required an immense set, the next set will most likely be much simpler with less demands on the set department. Sometimes the director will have a different vision of the play than what is presented by the playwright. Part of the beauty of the director's job is the liberty to do with the play whatever he or she

sees fit, and sometimes that means changing the set to fit the director's vision. In the case of *The Business of Murder*, the play called for an extremely simple set with minimal furniture. Instead of going this route, the director decided that a bigger, more gothic feel was needed to pull off the atmosphere that was initially planned. The set was changed from a single room set to a set resembling a bi-level house in which four rooms can be seen by the audience. With sets changing drastically from each previous production, it keeps the audience entertained and anxious for the next production.

A side of the theater that is not always seen is the financial planning department. Most shows are on a limited budget which they cannot exceed. These budgets usually depend on the success of previous shows, so once again, the order of the shows are important. Obviously, a lot of guess work is involved in this, as no one is sure how a show will turn out. This department spends a lot of its time trading funds. For example, if the costume designer has requested costume materials above what the theater is willing to spend, the costumes must be changed. If specific costumes are particularly important to this production, then either the set, lights, or sound will have to be changed to keep everything within the previously set price range. Unfortunately, sometimes finances get in the way of artistic expression and the show doesn't come off as originally planned, but that is a price that is sometimes paid.

As the premier week creeps closer and closer, everything falls into place. The original vision of the playwright combined with the vision of the director, with the separate interpretations of the actors, set director, and costume designers have turned into a wonderful production which audiences have come to expect from New American Theater. (C)

HOMMAGE

Lesa M. Sewick

Hommage: tribute paid to an artist, writer, composer, etc. as by incorporating some characteristic idiom or style of his in one's own work.

In the short time of only three months Cherri Rittenhouse, with space provided by RockValley College's Educational Resource Center, pulled together the "Hommage" art exhibition. The show was displayed in the ERC from January 22 to February 28, 1997. The exhibition was free and open to the public. "Hommage" is an exhibition of tribal art from Africa on loan from the collection of Rockford College and the work of contemporary artists. Local and internationally known artists were sent photographs of the tribal art on loan and asked to create a piece influenced by the photos. Tribal art has centuries of history from Africa to Mexico. Although many of the original tribes have vanished, artists try to depict and reproduce the unity of mankind that tribal art represents. Today, modern artists try to portray a whole new world through their own versions of tribal art.

In correspondence with black history month, Cherri Rittenhouse chose nine artists to contribute their time and effort. The artists chosen were Brent Jones, Robert McCauley, Franziska Nicholson, Ruphael Mariam, Marlene McCauley, Arline Sadlon, Gordon Powell, David Philpot, and Cherri Rittenhouse. These artists brought a variety of cultures and experiences to the exhibition.

Such artists like Ruphael Mariam from Ethiopia and Franziska Nicholson from Trinidad brought a cultural diversity to the show where as other artists like Arline Sadlon and Brent Jones are from Rockford. Each person's individual life is one great adventure, and along the way they each surpassed many of life's different experiences. Most of today's contemporary artists have a formal education past highschool which was different from artists of African tribes who created art as part of their heritage and culture. For example, Ruphael Mariam studied art at Northeastern Illinois University. For Cherri Rittenhouse, Northern Illinois University and Rockford College provided her education. Although these artists are from a variety of different cultures, they all share a common talent: creating art.

Many agreed that a big inspiration for their work is travel. Artist Franziska Nicholson, who studied fashion design in Vienna, found a whole new world when she designed and decorated the interior and exterior of Maruba Spa & Resort in the middle of the Belizian jungle of Central America. She also stated that the aspects of nature, earth, and aged metal helped her create the healing boards on display in the "Hommage" exhibition. In addition, Ruphael Mariam use dreams and his imagination to help him portray his world of art. The pieces Ruphael sent for the "Hommage" show were not his most recent pieces. He likes to use oil paints on canvas and when I look at the paintings I get a sense of hallucinations and transperency. Ruphael explained that he believes a great inspiration to any artist is to always believe any piece done from the heart will be great.

Diversity also appeared in the materials each artist used. For example, David Philpot made most of his pieces out of wood that he



carved into elaborately decorated canes and walking sticks. And Gordon Powell used an old piece of wood with a hole already punched through it to portray a simple checkered pattern, using yellow and black paint. Arline Sadlon, another simplist, often uses metal and/or transparent plexi-glass with simple designs and/or figures painted with acrylic paint. Robert McCauley, Chairman of the Art Department at Rockford College, on the other hand, stated he tended to use whatever it took to get there.

In sum, although many different types of tribal art exist, though the "Hommage" exhibition, one can better understand what Ruphael Mariam believes is the common thread which binds all tribal art.

7-1-97



“CROSSING THE BORDER”

BETTY ZIBAS

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